

DEFINITIONS OF PROFICIENCY FOR ACTFL AND ASLTA LANGUAGE TESTING

Beginning in October 2005, individuals seeking licensure or additional endorsement in French, Spanish, or German, shall demonstrate proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and aural comprehension in the language via passage of the Praxis II examinations in productive language and content knowledge for the appropriate language. (Please refer to the testing brochure for more information.) Latin will also most likely require Praxis II by October 2005. However, for languages other than those listed above, an ACTFL-trained tester in the target language shall evaluate proficiency. (Please contact actfl.org for more information on ACTFL proficiency testing.) For ASL speakers, proficiency shall be evaluated by an ASLTA certified individual. Definitions of proficiency for ACTFL evaluation are included below.

For teachers of languages that use the Roman alphabet: Proficiency is defined as:

Speaking and listening – The ability to handle with confidence, accuracy, clarity and precision a large number of communicative tasks; to participate in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete and familiar topics; to narrate and describe in all major tenses, by providing a full account with good control of aspect; to handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events within a routine communicative task; and to be readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives.

Reading – The ability to understand all essential points in texts within areas of personal interest or knowledge and to understand parts of unfamiliar or conceptually abstract and linguistically complex texts; and a sensitivity to the target language's aesthetic properties and literary styles.

Writing – The ability to write about a variety of topics with precision and detail, including most social and informal correspondence, summaries, reports, and research papers; to write extensively about topics relating to areas of personal interest or knowledge; to narrate and describe in all major tenses with good control of aspect; and to support ideas with various degrees of control depending on the topic.

This translates to performance at the Advanced-Mid level or higher on the ACTFL assessment.

For teachers of languages that do not use the Roman alphabet: Proficiency is defined as:

Speaking and listening – The ability to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine and social communicative tasks; to narrate and describe in the major tenses with some consistency; and to be generally understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although the dominant language is still evident.

Reading – The ability to read consistently with full understanding simple connected texts dealing with topics about which the reader has personal interest or knowledge, and to extract some ideas and information from less familiar and/or more complex texts.

Writing – The ability to meet all practical writing needs such as note taking on familiar topics, uncomplicated letters, simple summaries, and compositions related to work, current events or general interest; to connect sentences into paragraph forms in different tenses; and to write in such a way that the text is generally comprehensible to natives not used to dealing with non-natives, although some gaps in comprehension may occur.

This translates to performance at the Intermediate-High level or higher on the ACTFL assessment.

For the classical languages: Proficiency is defined as the ability to translate fluently from Latin or Greek to English and vice-versa; to read with comprehension and interpret original works of prose, epic or lyric poetry, drama, and inscriptions; to recite both prose and poetry with appropriate pronunciation and inflection; to conduct oral practice drills and ask comprehension questions about various types of texts in Latin or Greek; to write accurately in Latin or Greek; and to understand the place of Latin or Greek in the etymology of English words.

This translates to performance at the Advanced-Mid level or higher on the ACTFL assessment.

For American Sign Language: Proficiency is defined as:

Receptive – The ability to understand native users of American Sign Language at a normal tempo.

Expressive – The ability to sign with a command of vocabulary, nonmanual behaviors, and syntax adequate for expressing thoughts to an American Sign language user not accustomed to dealing with non-American sign language users.